

City of Newburgh

PRESS RELEASE

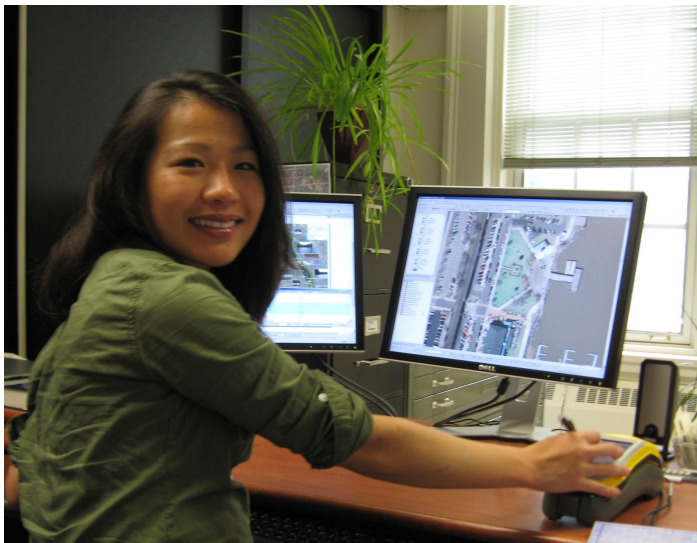
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 21, 2007

City of Newburgh Water Department Now Offers GIS services

The City of Newburgh Water Department has taken state-of-the-art technology to a new level. They now offer Geographic Information System (GIS) services to City departments and the general public. Some of the services are available free of charge; others can be



Jamie Lo, GIS Analyst

purchased at a predetermined cost.

What is GIS and what can it do for you? GIS displays, creates, stores, manages and analyzes, and overlays various forms of data, from local, state, and national sources including property files, the Census Bureau, voter registration records, etc., and converts it to maps. A typical GIS map, depending on the “query,” (what

you asked it to show) could indicate physical features about a given area, such as underground infrastructure, roads, and wetlands, as well as the number of single family homes, vacant properties, and residents over the age of 18.

The GIS map is created utilizing existing information such as aerial photographs, databases, maps, paper reports, and even local knowledge or personal experience. The technology is also making it possible for City departments to effectively organize and share information and to enhance work flow across departments.

“This initiative will improve customer service and increase efficiency, as comprehensive information can be accessed from one central source,” said City Manager Jean-Ann McGrane.

GIS can also help monitor the City’s valuable natural resources. Recently, some City employees surveyed Brown’s Pond by boat to gauge the impact of curly leaf pond weed. Using a special Global Positioning System, (GPS), a hand-held data collection device compatible with GIS, the coordinates (latitude and longitude) of each patch of the pesky weed, as well as digital pictures, were captured, relayed to the GIS system, and a detailed map was produced. The Water Department now has a better handle on the severity of the problem, and can monitor the success of their efforts to eradicate it.

Other important uses include compiling data on and monitoring the City’s aging infrastructure, making it easier to identify and respond to problems. GIS also has applications in crime analysis and in stormwater management.

Applying GIS to stormwater management allows for the detection of unlawful discharge. This helps the city develop ways to minimize runoff pollutants in order to comply with federal and state regulations. As the technology becomes more prominent in the public services sector, it can improve the decision-making process by providing up-to-date and complete information regarding the condition and location of the components of the storm drain system and discharge water quality. In addition, GIS will make it easier to trace the cause of any stormwater system problems and track maintenance needs.

For realtors, developers, and potential property owners, GIS can also be a valuable tool to obtain information about a specific neighborhood, or the City.

For more information, visit the website at <http://www.cityofnewburgh-ny.gov/GIS/intro.htm> or the City Clerk’s office, 83 Broadway. Ready-to-view static maps about the City are available for download. To request customized maps or digital data, please contact Jamie Lo, GIS Analyst at (845) 569-7488.